(b) Government has earmarked Rs. 23 crores in the IX Plan under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes for the conservation and development of forests in Assam.

Use of LPG as fuel

435. SHRI SATISH CHANDRA SITARAM PRADHAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state whehter the Ministry of Environment an Forests is pursuing with Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas the matter for use of LPG as fuel in motor vehicles, to avoid pollution?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): Yes, Sir. The Ministry of Environment and Forests has written to the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas and the Ministry of Surface Transport on the use of LPG auto fuel.

Revision of forest policy

436. SHRI SURYABHAN PATIL VAHADANE: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal to revise country's Forest Policy; and

(b) what are the salient features of the Forest Policy of Maharashtra and the steps taken by Government to save the valuable forest resources, including wild life of the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) There is no separate forest policy of Maharashtra. National Forest Policy, 1988 is being implemented in Maharashtra which has the main objective to ensure environmental stability and maintenance of ecological balance by conserving the natural forests of the country. State Government has taken steps necessary for protection and development of forests through the involvement of local people and by creating a network of national parks and sanctuaries.

Ninth Plan allocation for protection of forests in North-East

437. SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the amount allocated for protection of environment and forests in the North Eastern Region, State-wise, in the Ninth Five Year Plan; and

(b) the measures contemplated to be taken during the period of the Ninth Five Year Plan to save the forest products from wanton destruction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) Ministry of Environment and Forests has earmarked Rs. 11,990.74 lakhs for various developmental schemes including protection of enrivonment and forests in the North Eastern Region during the Ninth Plan period. State wise details are as under:

(Rs. in lakhs)

States	Amount
Arunachal Pradesh	1301.39
Assam	2812.67
Manipur	3142.66
Meghalaya	638.07
Mizoram	2218.19
Nagaland	644.93
Tripura	1232.83
Total	11990.74

(b) Protection measures taken up by the State Governments are to keep in view the comprehensive direction of the Hon'ble Supreme Court regarding forest protection and working of forest in North East. These include:

(i) Future working of forests only in accordance with the working plans approved by Government of India.

(ii) Transportation of auctioned timber as well as legal timber including sawn timber outside NE region only through Railways under the strict supervision of Forest Department.

(iii) Complete moratorium on the issue of new licences for the establishment of any new wood based industries for the next five years.

(iv) All the wood based industries allowed to function (after utilisation of existing stocks) only in the industrial estates as notified by State Government in consultation with Ministry of Environment & Forests.

(v) Preparation of an Action Plan for intensive patrolling and other necessary protective measures in vulnerable areas.

(vi) Empowering of forest officers in the North Eastern states with authority to investigate, prosecute and confiscate on the lines of the powers conferred in many other states.

(vii) The States Government providing all facilities including security and police force to strictly enforce forest protection measures.

(viii) Identification of ecologically sensitive areas to ensure that such areas are totally excluded from any kind of exploitation. The minimum extent of such areas to be 10% of the total forest areas of the state.

(ix) States to ensure that sufficient budgetary provisions are made for the preservation of biodiversity and protection of wildlife.

Under Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, Arunachal Pradesh Forest Protection Authority and Nagaland Forest Protection and Development Authority were notified. North East Cell has been created in the Ministry to deal expeditiously with all matters pertaining to North East States.

Action against industries polluting Ganga

438. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state the action taken against defaulting polluting industries for polluting the river Ganga?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): Under the Ganga Action Plan Phase-I, 68 grossly polluting industries were identified in UP, Bihar and West Bengal in 1985. These industries were directed to install effluent treatment plants. Out of these 68 industries, presently 24 units are closed, 41 units are complying with operating effluent treatment plants and 3 units are defaulting and facing legal action. Subsequently, in 1997, 119 additional grossly polluting industries were identified in these three States. Out of these, 50 units are already complying with effluent treatment plants 8 units are closed and legal action has been taken against the remaining 61 defaulting units which are in UP. Directions have also been issued by the UP State Pollution Control Board to these defaulting units for installation and proper operation of effluent treatment plants.

Projects pending for environmental clearance

439. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of projects pending for environmental clearance as on 31st October, 1999 and since when these are pending, State-wise;

(b) whether Government have launched a web-site to provide latest information regarding clearance status of all the environmental and forestry project applications; if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government, in consultation with the Reserve Bank of India, have worked out any procedure for allocation of more funds for environmental projects; if so, the details thereof?